What was school like in ancient Greece?

If you were a child living in ancient Greece, the type of school you went to would depend on whereabouts you lived. In Sparta, adults taught their children to be strong warriors. In Athens, adults wanted their children to grow up to be educated, free-thinking citizens. Athens was well-known for its good education.

Who went to school?

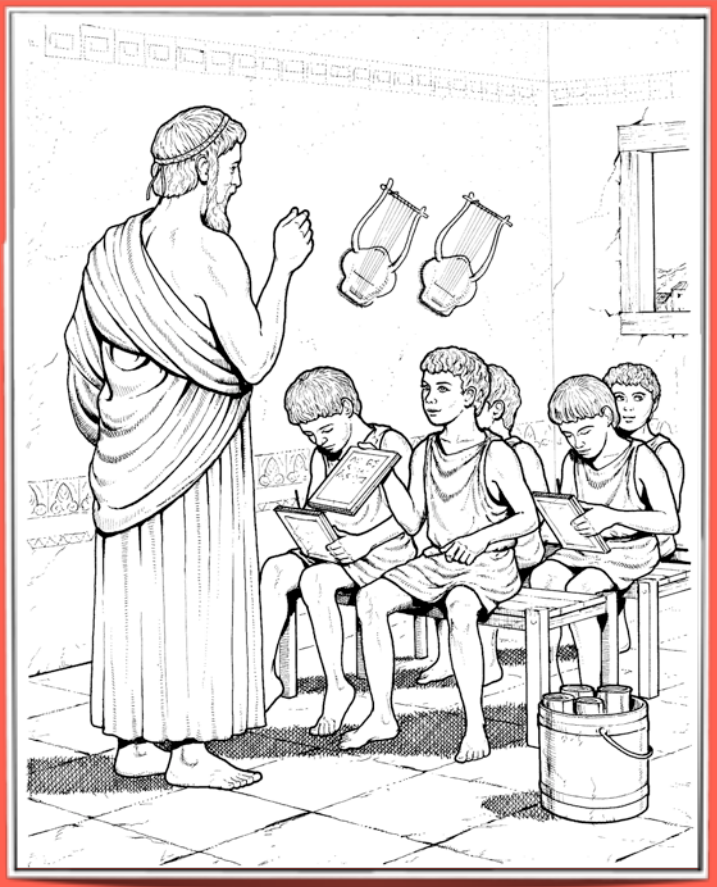
Education was not free in ancient Greece so only the rich could afford to be educated for long. Poor children would get a basic education and then learn the family trade so they could earn a living. Richer children would start school at around the age of seven and stay until they were eighteen. Girls were not sent to school. They were taught at home by their mothers. They learnt how to run a household as well as to read and write if their mother could teach them.

What did boys learn at school?

Boys learnt how to read and write. They also did arithmetic, poetry, music, dancing and athletics.

What equipment did Greek schools have?

Paper was very expensive so they didn't use books to write in. Instead, they used a wooden slate covered in wax which they would write on with a stick called a stylus. This was pointed at one end for writing and flat the other end for rubbing out. They sat on stools but didn't have desks.



How big were ancient Greek schools?

Most schools were very small and only had one room. Usually, boys would go to the teacher's house. It was common to have around four or five pupils in one school.

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WHAT WAS SCHOOL LIKE IN ANCIENT GREECE?

If you were a child living in ancient Greece, the type of school you went to would depend on whereabouts you lived. In Sparta, adults taught their children to be strong warriors. Boys were sent to train for war at the age of seven and only learnt the basics of reading and writing. In Athens, adults wanted their children to grow up to be educated, free-thinking citizens who could take a part in running the state successfully when they grew up.

Who went to school?

It was only boys who received a proper education in ancient Greece. They started school at the age of seven and, if they could afford it, stayed in school until they were eighteen. Poorer children would receive a basic education and then learn the family trade so they could earn a living. Some could not afford to go to school at all. Girls were taught at home by their mothers. They were taught how to spin, sew, cook and run the household. Some girls learnt to read and write but only if their mothers could teach them.

What did boys learn at school?

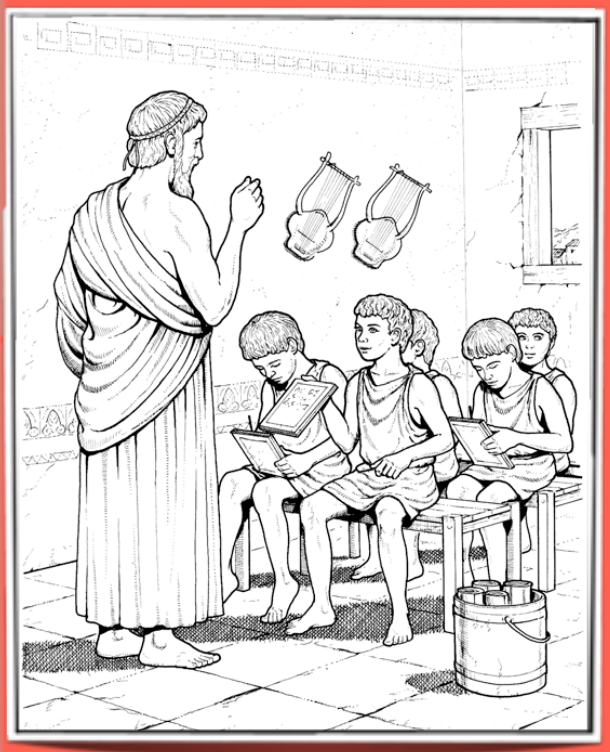
Children didn't study as many different subjects as we do today. They were first taught reading, writing and arithmetic by a *grammatistes*. A *kitharistes* would teach them how to recite poetry (Homer's poetry was most popular), sing songs and play musical instruments such as the lyre. A *paidotribes* taught athletics and dancing. He would take them to a *gymnasium* or a *palaestra* (a wrestling ground).

What equipment did Greek schools have?

Paper was very expensive so they didn't use books to write in. Instead, they used a wooden slate covered in wax which they would write on with a stick called a stylus. This was pointed at one end for writing and flat the other end for rubbing out.

How big were ancient Greek schools?

Most schools were simply one room in the teacher's house. A group of perhaps four or five boys would attend each school. The size of the school would depend on the size of the town or city you lived in. As well as the teacher, rich pupils would have a slave called a *paedogous* who would take them to and from school and ensure they behaved well.



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How do we use ancient Greek ideas today? Worksheet 3A

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Read Fact Sheet A then answer these questions:



1. Which city state was well-known for its good education?

_____

2. Why did poor children only stay at school for a short time? _____

_____

3. What did girls do instead of going to school? _____

_____

4. When did rich boys start and finish school? _____

_____

5. Which 5 subjects did children learn at school? _____

_____

6. Why didn't children use paper at school? _____

_____

7. What is a stylus and what was it used for? _____

_____

8. Whose house was the school usually held in? _____

_____

9. Do you think you would have liked going to school in ancient Greece? Why? _____

_____

_____

10. What do you think is the biggest difference between our schools and schools in ancient Greece? _____

_____

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How do we use ancient Greek ideas today? Worksheet 3B

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Read Fact Sheet B then answer these questions:



1. How old were boys in Sparta when they were sent to train for war?

_____

2. How many years did rich boys stay at school for? _____

_____

3. Why do you think girls could not go to school? _____

_____

4. What did girls learn to do at home? _____

_____

5. What did a *grammatistes* teach? _____

_____

6. What was a *palaestra*? _____

_____

7. Name two subjects you study at school that ancient Greeks did not study? _____

_____

8. What was a stylus and what was it used for? _____

_____

9. Why do you think ancient Greek schools were so small? _____

_____

10. Who was a *pedogogus*? _____

_____

11. Name three differences between our schools today and ancient Greek schools: _____

_____

_____

_____

12. Name three similarities between our schools today and ancient Greek schools: _____

_____

_____

_____

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How do we use ancient Greek ideas today? Worksheet 3C

Name: _____ **Date:** _____



Can you create a list of similarities and differences between our schools today and schools in ancient Greece?

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES

Are there more similarities or more differences that you can think of?

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WHO WENT TO SCHOOL IN ANCIENT GREECE?	WHAT AGE DID CHILDREN START AND FINISH SCHOOL?
WHAT WERE THE DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATION IN ATHENS AND SPARTA?	WHAT SUBJECTS DID CHILDREN LEARN AT SCHOOL?
WHAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF TEACHERS DID THEY HAVE AND WHAT DID THEY TEACH?	WHAT DID GIRLS LEARN TO DO?
WHAT EQUIPMENT DID SCHOOLS HAVE IN ANCIENT GREECE?	HOW BIG WERE SCHOOLS IN ANCIENT GREECE?
WHAT DIFFERENCES ARE THERE BETWEEN OUR SCHOOLS AND ANCIENT GREEK SCHOOLS?	WHAT SIMILARITIES ARE THERE BETWEEN OUR SCHOOLS AND ANCIENT GREEK SCHOOLS?

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